

ARTICLE 26

GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR LANDSCAPING

Legislative Intent. The purpose of this Article is to regulate the planting and preservation of landscape materials; to promote the general health, safety and welfare of Town citizens; to facilitate the creation of an attractive and healthy environment; to protect property values; and to further the urban design and economic development objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. To these ends, these regulations are intended to promote the planting and preservation of landscape materials which:

- provide visual screening and noise buffering between incompatible land uses;
- provide parking lot landscaping to reduce the harmful effects of heat, noise, and glare associated with motor vehicle use;
- provide for the creation of safe, attractively landscaped areas adjacent to public streets by using landscape materials which separate vehicular and pedestrian areas; and
- provide for useful and attractive open space areas within the Town for the use of its citizens.

26-1 Applicability

The provisions of this Article shall apply to all site development plans submitted for approval after the effective date of this Ordinance, including those which include the reconstruction or enlargement of existing structures. This includes the enlargement of any parking lot, but does not include the resurfacing of any existing lot. This Article shall apply to the construction of any parking lot with greater than five (5) spaces, and to the construction, extension or widening of any public or private street.

26-2 Landscape Plan Required

A landscape plan meeting the requirements of this Article is required for all site development plans required under Article 27 of this Ordinance.

26-3 Review Procedures

The Planning Director shall be responsible for the review of all landscape plans according to the procedures and time frames for review of site development plans outlined in Article 27. The Planning Director will approve or disapprove the plan with notice provided in writing and addressed to the owner, or their designated agent, as identified on the site plan documents.

26-4 Landscape Plan Requirements

Every landscape plan required by this Article shall be prepared by a person in the practice of landscape design who is certified by the State of Virginia. All landscape plans shall contain the following information:

- plans shall be drawn to a scale of not less than thirty (30) feet to the inch on sheets no less than eighteen by twenty-four inches (18" X 24") or greater than thirty-six by twenty-four inches (36" X 24").
- all plans shall illustrate with sufficient detail the location of all proposed construction including driveways, parking areas, curbs, sidewalks, utility lines, structures, and landscape areas. Landscape areas shall indicate dimensions, and all proposed locations of trees and plants.
- all plans shall be accompanied by a schedule of plants proposed, including the number proposed, their height, caliper, or gallon size, and the common and botanical name.
- all plans shall include a table calculating the amount of open space and/or parking lot area and the number of plants and trees required by the Ordinance and the amount of open space and trees and plants provided.
- any existing vegetation proposed to be saved shall be identified by name, location, and size. Methods of protecting the vegetation during construction activities shall be illustrated and/or explained.

26-5 Street Tree Planting

Street tree planting is required any time a public street is constructed, expanded, or widened. This requirement shall apply to all development in a commercial or industrial district, and all multifamily, townhouse, and condominium developments. Wherever possible, street trees shall be planted in the public

right-of-way and maintenance of these trees shall be the responsibility of the Town of Warrenton, provided that the owner or developer responsible for initial installation shall be responsible for replacing all trees that die within the first year of installation. In cases where street trees are not within the public right-of-way, and they are located adjacent to units for sale, the trees shall be protected through an open space or easement arrangement, and shall be maintained through a property owner's association approved by the Town. Where parking lots abut public street rights-of-way, the provisions of Section 26-6.2 shall apply.

26-5.1 Street Tree Standards

- In reviewing plans for street tree plantings, the Planning Director shall consider the size, type, and condition of existing street trees, and any adopted design studies, landscape plans, or design themes for the street.
- The majority of street trees planted shall be medium or large scale canopy trees to provide shade and visual relief. On any street right-of-way on which the utility pole line for power, street lights, and/or telephone service is or will be located, small flowering trees may be used.
- A minimum of one (1) large tree is required for every fifty (50) feet of street frontage or part thereof. This provision does not require the planting of trees at even intervals. Small flowering trees should be planted no more than twenty-five (25) feet apart, or in groups of two (2) or three (3) trees planted no more than fifty (50) feet apart.

26-5.2 Street Tree Specifications

For the purposes of this section, the following minimum specifications for plant materials shall apply:

- The following varieties of trees, listed by common name, are appropriate for use as street trees: Green Ash; Sycamore; Red Maple; Norway Maple; Sugar Maple; Pin Oak; Red Oak; Willow Oak; Sweet Gum; London Plane Tree; Japanese Pagoda Tree; Littleleaf Linden; Silver Linden; and Japanese Zelkova.

- Large street trees shall be a minimum of fifteen (15) feet in height, with a caliper of three (3) inches, at time of planting. Such trees shall be expected to attain a height of at least fifty (50) feet at maturity.
- Medium street trees shall be a minimum of twelve (12) feet in height, with a caliper of two-and-one-half (2.5) inches, at the time of planting. Such trees shall be expected to attain a height of at least thirty (30) feet at maturity.
- Ornamental trees shall be a minimum of six (6) feet in height, with a caliper of one-and-one-half (1.5) inches, at the time of planting. Such trees shall be expected to attain a maximum height of twenty-five (25) feet at maturity.

26-6 Parking Lot Landscaping

All parking areas described below, unless explicitly exempted, must be landscaped as described in this Article. For the purposes of this Article, parking lots are defined as any area used for the display or parking of any and all types of vehicles, boats, farm machinery, lawn and garden equipment, or heavy construction equipment, whether these items are for sale or lease. This definition includes, but is not limited to, parking lots and display areas for automobile dealerships and service stations. The area of the parking lot shall be calculated to include all paved areas used for ingress, egress, internal circulation, loading, and parking stalls.

26-6.1 Perimeter Landscaping

- Perimeter parking lot landscaping shall include all landscaped areas outside the perimeter of the paved area of the lot, including any landscape area required adjacent to a public right-of-way.
- Street trees shall be planted in accordance with Section 26-5 along all public street frontages which abut a parking lot. An additional continuous planting of low street shrubs shall be required between the public right-of-way and parking lot, located within a planting bed with a minimum eight (8) foot width.
- Edges of parking lots that do not abut public rights-of-way will provide a continuous landscaped area five (5) feet in width between the

property line and the parking lot. One (1) canopy tree and three (3) shrubs for every fifty (50) feet of frontage shall be planted in this area.

- Alternate methods of landscaping designed to decrease the visual impact of the parking lot, such as low fences, walls, or earthen berms, may also be approved by the Planning Director.
- No plant material, fence, wall, or berm shall obstruct the sight distance of motorists entering or leaving the site.

26-6.2 Interior Landscaping

- Interior parking lot landscaping shall include any landscape area over fifty (50) square feet in area within the perimeter of the paved parking area, and greater than five (5) feet from any main structure.
- These requirements shall apply to the construction or enlargement of any parking lot with eight (8) or more spaces. Such landscaping shall be in addition to perimeter parking lot landscaping, street tree planting, and screening. The requirements of this Section shall specifically not apply to automobile sales centers.
- An area equal to five (5) percent of the paved area for parking, circulation, ingress, egress, and loading shall be landscaped with trees and shrubs. Paved storage areas for such uses as lumber or storage yards and warehouses may be subtracted from this total.
- No landscaped area shall be less than fifty (50) square feet in area. Wherever possible, landscaped areas should be evenly distributed to provide shade and visual relief throughout the parking area.
- There shall be one (1) tree and three (3) shrubs for every eight (8) parking spaces. At least seventy-five percent (75%) of the trees shall be canopy trees.

26-6.3 Parking Lot Planting Specifications

For the purposes of this section, the following minimum specifications for parking lot plant materials shall apply:

- The following varieties of canopy trees, listed by common name, are appropriate for use as perimeter and interior plantings: Green Ash; Red Maple; Norway Maple; Sugar Maple; Red Oak; Willow Oak; Japanese Pagoda Tree; Japanese Zelkova; and Yellowwood. Evergreen trees include: Eastern Red Cedar; White Pine; Austrian Pine; Norway Spruce; American Holly; and Dark American Arborvitae. Ornamental trees include: Amur Maple; Dogwood; Washington Hawthorn; American Plum; Bradford Pear; Flowering Cherry; and Serviceberry.
- The following varieties of shrubs, listed by common name, are appropriate for use as perimeter and interior plantings: Azalea; Cotoneaster; Forsythia; Viburnum; Winged Euonymus; and Flowering Quince. Evergreen shrubs include: English Yew; Japanese Yew; Azalea; Chinese Holly; Japanese Holly; Rhododendron; and Abelia.
- Large street trees and canopy trees shall be a minimum of fifteen (15) feet in height, with a caliper of three (3) inches, at time of planting. Such trees shall be expected to attain a height of at least fifty (50) feet at maturity.
- Medium street trees shall be a minimum of twelve (12) feet in height, with a caliper of two-and-one-half (2.5) inches, at the time of planting. Such trees shall be expected to attain a height of at least thirty (30) feet at maturity.
- Evergreen trees shall be a minimum of eight (8) feet in height and be full branching at time of planting.
- Ornamental trees shall be a minimum of six (6) feet in height, with a caliper of one-and-one-half (1.5) inches, at the time of planting. Such trees shall be expected to attain a maximum height of twenty-five (25) feet at maturity.
- Shrubs shall be a minimum of two (2) feet in height at the time of planting. Shrubs or hedges planted to form a continuous, solid visual screen along public rights-of-way shall be at least two (2) feet in height within one (1) year of planting.

26-7 Screening and Buffer Yards

The requirements of this Section shall apply to all new construction and all reconstruction or enlargement of existing structures or uses constituting more than fifty (50) percent of the floor area or use. Screening is to be provided and maintained when certain conflicting land uses are located adjacent to, or opposite from each other, to protect less-intensive uses from the effects of traffic, noise, glare, trash, activity, visual disorder, or other noxious effects likely to be emitted by or associated with a more intensive use. The burden to provide the necessary screening and buffer remains with the more intensive use to be screened, and is a continuing obligation which runs with the land so long as the original relationship between adjacent or opposite lots exists. In instances where the adjacent or opposite property is vacant, requirements for buffer yards shall be determined using the anticipated land use identified by the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map.

26-7.1 Screening

Visual screening is required for the areas, uses, and activities listed below, unless specifically exempted from these requirements by the Town Council. Screening shall be obtained through the use of fences, walls, evergreen vegetation, earthen berms, or a combination of these methods.

- Open storage areas, loading areas, and loading docks, and exposed machinery associated with commercial or industrial activities shall be screened from view of adjacent properties and the public right-of-way to a height of at least eight (8) feet.
- Satellite dishes shall be screened from view, along at least three (3) sides, to a minimum height of one-half the height of the satellite dish, from adjacent residential properties and public rights-of-way.
- Outdoor areas used for the storage and/or collection of refuse, including trash dumpsters, shall be located in a paved area and screened from view, either from within or outside the lot, to a maximum height of eight (8) feet.
- Detention ponds shall be screened from adjacent residential properties and public rights-of-way to a height of at least four (4) feet.

26-7.2 Buffer Yards, General Requirements

- Buffer yards are land areas reserved for the purpose of providing screening and separation from adjacent, different land uses. These areas shall not be used for the storage of materials, buildings, parking and loading areas for motor vehicles, or signs. Driveways and entrances connecting adjacent parking lots or developments may interrupt the required buffer yard if the Planning Director determines such interruption does not defeat the intent of this Article.
- Buffer yards may be provided in the area required for setbacks, except in residential zoning districts. Buffer yards in residential zoning districts may be provided by the use of common open space; common use easements located outside the required lot area; or, by providing additional yard space in addition to the minimum yard requirements listed in the residential zoning district regulations.
- In the instance when the buffer yard required by this Article exceeds the setback required by the zoning district regulations, the required buffer yard must be provided.
- Any existing buffer yard proposed to be saved by a site development plan application, which complies with the intention of this Article, as determined by the Planning Director, shall be deemed to meet these buffer yard requirements.
- Whenever a proposed development plan is adjacent to a developed property that has not provided any or all of the required buffer, the adjacent proposed development shall provide one half of the width of the required buffer yard.
- No buffer yard shall be required which comprises more than fifteen (15) percent of the subject property. In any case where the required buffer yard would exceed fifteen (15) percent of the property, the buffer yard shall be reduced to fifteen (15) percent of the gross area of the site.

26-7.3 Uses Requiring Buffer Yards

- Commercial, office, public, semi-public, institutional, and industrial uses, including associated parking lots, shall provide a buffer yard between adjacent residential and recreational uses.
- Townhouses, condominiums, duplexes, two (2) family dwellings, mobile home parks, and multifamily developments, including parking lots of ten (10) or more vehicles, shall provide a buffer yard between adjacent single-family detached dwellings.
- Residential uses shall provide a buffer yard between adjacent major collector or arterial streets. (Adopted Town Council 3/16/99)

26-7.4 Required Widths and Plantings in Buffer Yards

- Commercial, office, public, semi-public, and institutional uses from residential uses: minimum twenty-five (25) foot width plus one (1) foot for each foot of building height over thirty-five (35) feet. Vegetation shall be a minimum of a double staggered row of evergreen trees planted fifteen (15) feet on center, or a double staggered row of evergreen shrubs planted ten (10) feet on center. Such screening shall form a dense, continuous visual screen at least six (6) feet in height within one (1) year of planting. A fence or wall may be provided, with a minimum six (6) foot height, with evergreen plantings interspersed every twenty-five (25) feet along the side of the wall facing the residential use. Earthen berms may also be used in combination with vegetative materials and fences as approved by the Planning Director.
- Industrial uses from residential uses: minimum fifty (50) foot width plus one (1) foot for each foot of building height over thirty-five (35) feet. Vegetation shall be a minimum of a double staggered row of evergreen trees planted fifteen (15) feet on center, or a double staggered row of evergreen shrubs planted ten (10) feet on center. Such screening shall form a dense, continuous visual screen at least six (6) feet in height within one (1) year of planting. A fence or wall may be provided, with a minimum six (6) foot height, with evergreen plantings interspersed every twenty-five (25) feet along the side of the wall facing the residential use. Earthen berms may also be used in

combination with vegetative materials and fences as approved by the Planning Director.

- Townhouses, condominiums, duplexes, two-family dwellings, mobile home parks, PUD's, and multifamily developments, including parking lots of ten (10) or more vehicles, from single-family detached dwellings: minimum fifteen (15) foot width. Vegetation shall be a minimum of a double staggered row of evergreen trees planted fifteen (15) feet on center, or a double staggered row of evergreen shrubs planted ten (10) feet on center. Such screening shall form a dense, continuous visual screen at least six (6) feet in height within one (1) year of planting. A fence or wall may be provided, with a minimum six (6) foot height, with evergreen plantings interspersed every twenty-five (25) feet along the side of the wall facing the residential use. Earthen berms may also be used in combination with vegetative materials and fences as approved by the Planning Director.
- Residential uses from adjacent major collector or arterial streets: shall consist of an unbroken strip of open space, a minimum of 25 feet wide. Vegetation shall consist of one large evergreen tree for every 15 linear feet. Such planting shall form a dense, continuous screen when mature. A fence or wall may be provided, with a minimum of six (6) foot height, with evergreen plantings interspersed every twenty-five (25) feet along both sides of the fence or wall. Earthen berms may also be used in combination with vegetative materials and fences as approved by the Planning Director. (Adopted Town Council 3/16/99)

- 26-7.5** Required plantings for properties that abut the U.S. Route 29 Bypass
- Property owners who have land that abuts the U.S. Route 29 Bypass shall be required in addition to the other requirements of this Ordinance, to install plantings on their property as shown on the Town of Warrenton U.S. Route 29, Bypass Corridor Landscape Improvements plan prepared by Patton, Harris, Rust and Associates dated June 1996. (Amended by Council 8/12/97)

26-8 Retention and Replacement of Trees and Woodlands

26-8.1 Retention of Mature Trees

- The applicant/subdivider shall arrange lots in such a fashion as to preserve existing woodlands and trees of six (6) inch caliper or greater. Wherever possible, lots should be designed so as to place existing woodlands and mature trees within required setbacks and buffer yards.

26-8.2 Tree Protection Zones

- Tree protection zones shall be established for all trees and woodlands designated for retention on the site development plan. The tree protection zone shall extend radially for fifteen (15) feet from the trunk of the tree to be retained, or the distance from the trunk to the dripline, whichever is greater. Tree protection zones shall meet the following requirements:
 - a. grade changes and excavations shall not encroach upon the tree protection zone.
 - b. no toxic materials, including petroleum based or derived products, shall be stored within one hundred (100) feet of the tree protection zone.
 - c. the area within the tree protection zone shall not be built upon, nor shall any materials be stored, either temporarily or permanently. Vehicles and equipment shall not be parked within the zone.
 - d. tree stumps located within ten (10) feet of the tree protection zone shall be removed by means of a stump grinder.
 - e. severed tree roots adjacent to the tree protection zone shall be cut by a backhoe, or similar equipment, aligned radially to the tree. Roots shall not be cut in such a way as to cause lateral movement of the root systems. All severed roots shall be covered within four (4) hours and covered with moist peat moss, moist burlap, or other moist biodegradable material until permanent cover is installed.
 - f. sediment, retention, and detention basins shall not be located or discharged into the tree protection zone.

26-8.3 Site Development Procedures

- Trees scheduled to remain shall be marked. Where woodlands or groups of trees are to be retained, only those trees on the perimeter shall be marked. Temporary fencing may be required along areas adjacent to heavy equipment operation.
- Trees to be removed shall not be felled, pushed, or pulled into a tree protection zone or into trees that are to be retained.
- In addition to the tree protection zone, additional trees may be left standing between the trunks of the trees to be retained and the limits of grading or construction activity. These trees shall be removed near the completion of the project to permit final grading and landscaping to be accomplished.
- When the original grade cannot be retained at the tree protection zone line, a retaining wall shall be constructed outside the tree protection zone. The wall shall be constructed of large stones, brick, building tile, concrete, or treated wood beams not less than six (6) inches by six (6) inches. A means for drainage through the wall shall be provided so water will not accumulate on either side of the wall. A layer of clean stone, sized three-quarter (3/4) to one (1) inch, shall be placed at a thickness of one (1) foot along the base of the wall, extending in height to twelve (12) inches below finished grade. The retaining wall shall be four (4) inches above the finished grade line.
- All trees which have experienced any disturbance or have had damage to roots or branches shall be fertilized. This shall be accomplished in early fall (September-October) or mid-spring (April-May), with fall application preferred. Fertilizer shall be broadcast over the surface in an area twice the size of the tree protection zone, or a minimum area of one thousand (1,000) square feet per tree, whichever is larger. Fertilizer grade shall have approximately three (3) parts nitrogen to one (1) part phosphorous and one (1) part potassium (3-1-1 ratio) and be applied at a rate equivalent to one (1) pound nitrogen per one thousand (1,000) square feet.
- In instances where there is no alternative to locating underground utilities within a tree protection zone, tunneling should be used

wherever possible to avoid trenching. Where trenches are to be used, they should be located as far away as possible from tree trunks and tamped lightly to avoid air pockets.

26-8.4 Tree Replacement Requirements

- In instances where trees of six (6) inch caliper or larger are removed, they shall be replaced by trees indigenous to the Warrenton region. Deciduous trees shall be replaced by deciduous species and nondeciduous trees shall be replaced by nondeciduous species. The sum of the calipers of replacement trees shall total or exceed the total caliper of trees removed.

26-8.5 Trees Protected From Removal

- Deciduous or evergreen trees of eighteen (18) inch caliper or greater, and flowering or ornamental trees of ten (10) inch caliper or greater, shall not be removed unless the subdivider can demonstrate that such trees pose a risk to life or property; that the tree has been damaged or is otherwise unhealthy and unlikely to survive; or that retention would pose a severe economic burden on the property owner.

26-9 Planting Procedures

All trees and shrubs shall be installed in a sound manner following accepted professional planting procedures. At a minimum, all trees planted shall have rootballs adequate to enclose the entire root system, all trees shall be mulched and staked, and all plants shall be watered at time of installation.

26-10 Penalties for Unauthorized Removal

In instances where trees are removed prior to approval of a site grading plan, or in violation of an approved tree protection plan, the applicant shall reimburse the town for the assessed value of the tree and associated administrative costs incurred by site inspection, enforcement, and tree replacement. Such funds shall be used to plant replacement trees on the site in the location of the trees illegally removed.

26-11 Maintenance Responsibilities

The owner, or his agent, of commercial and industrial uses, multifamily rental units, and common open spaces controlled by homeowners associations, shall be responsible for the maintenance, repair, and replacement of all landscape materials, fences, berms, and walls required by this Article. All Landscape materials shall be kept in a healthy condition free of all disease and infestation. All fences, berms, and walls shall be maintained in a safe and attractive condition. The owner or agent, upon written notification by the Zoning Administrator, shall repair or replace any landscape materials, fences, berms, or walls not meeting the requirements of this Section within thirty (30) days receipt of said notice.